

APPENDIX D: THE PRESIDIO'S CAVALRY IN THE NATIONAL PARKS, 1891-1913

Beginning in 1891 cavalry units from the Presidio of San Francisco protected the Yosemite and Sequoia national parks in California. The troopers carried out this mission for twenty-two years, until a civilian administration took over in 1914. Gabriel Sovulewski, the civilian supervisor at Yosemite following the Army's departure, later compiled a list of the cavalry units in the park and the army officers who were acting superintendents of the Yosemite from 1891 to 1914:¹

Troops and Acting Superintendents during Army Administration – Yosemite National Park

1891	Troop "I" 4th U.S. Cavalry, Captain A.E. Wood
1892	Troop "I" 4th U.S. Cavalry, Captain A.E. Wood
1893	Troop "I" 4th U.S. Cavalry, Captain A.E. Wood
1894	Troop "C" 4th U.S. Cavalry, Captain G.H.G. Gale
1895	Troop "K" 4th U.S. Cavalry, Captain Alex Rodgers
1896	Troops "B" and "K", 4th U.S. Cavalry, Lt. Col. S.B.M. Young
1897	Troop "K" 4th U.S. Cavalry, Captain Alex Rodgers
1898	First Troop Volunteer Utah Cavalry, Acting Superintendents: J.W. Zevely and Captain Joseph E. Caine, Utah Vol. Cavalry
1899	Lt. George H. McMasters, 24th Infantry (Colored) Relieved by Lt. William Forse, Third Artillery. Relieved by Captain E.F. Willcox, Troop "F" 6th Cavalry, August 4.
1900	Troop "F" 6th Cavalry, Major L.H. Rucker
1901	Troop "H" 15th Cavalry, Major L.A. Craig
1902	Troop "E" 3rd Cavalry Major O.L. Hein
1903	Troops "K" and "L" 9th Cavalry (Colored) Lt. Col. Joseph Garrard, 14th Cavalry
1904	Troops "K" and "L" 9th Cavalry, Major John Bigelow, Jr.
1905	Troops of the 4th Cavalry, Can't trace what letters – sometime when I run onto information will let you know – Major H.C. Benson in command.
1906	Troops "K" and "M" 14th Cavalry, Major H.C. Benson
1907	Troops "I" and "M" 14th Cavalry, Major H.C. Benson
1908	Troops "I" and "M" 14th Cavalry, Major H.C. Benson
1909	Troops "I" and "M" 14th Cavalry, Major Wm. W. Forsyth, 6th Cav. commanding
1910	Troops "D" and "K" 1st Cavalry, Major Wm. W. Forsyth, 6th Cav.
1911	Troops "D" and "K" 1st Cavalry, Major Wm. W. Forsyth, 6th Cav.

1. Files, Yosemite National Park Research Library. Concerning Sovulewski's entry for 1905, the Presidio of San Francisco experienced a shortage of cavalry troops that year. The Presidio of Monterey dispatched Maj. Harry C. Benson and Troop K, 4th Cavalry, to Yosemite to provide that season's protection. Extract from the Post Returns, Presidio of Monterey, 1905. Information supplied by Harvey Meyerson, Alexandria, Virginia.

- 1912 Troops "C" and "D" 1st Cavalry, Major Wm. W. Forsyth, 1st Cav. transferred
- 1913 Troops "A" and "B" 1st Cavalry, Major Wm. T. Littebrant
- 1914 I relieved Major Littebrant on July 14, 1914.² Mark Daniels signed annual report – but all the administrative work was carried by me.
- 1915 On June 10, 1915 Mark Daniels introduced fellow by the name of George V. Bell, as Superintendent. However, they did not interfere with any of my work. 1915 was the most critical period in National Parks – especially in Yosemite. Mark Daniels and Bell resigned sometime in October 1915, or probably in November, and Mr. Mather instructed me to ship all office equipment and furniture from Mark Daniels office in San Francisco Office for use in Yosemite and take charge of the park as usual until Superintendent be selected and appointed.

W.B. Lewis relieved me April 6, 1916.

A partial list of the cavalry units and acting superintendents that protected the Sequoia National Park for the same years has been extracted from the Presidio's post returns, 1891-1913:

- 1891 Troop K, 4th U.S. Cavalry, Capt. Joseph H. Dorst
- 1892 Troop K, 4th U.S. Cavalry, Capt. Joseph H. Dorst
- 1893 Troop B, 4th U.S. Cavalry, Capt. James Parker³
- 1894 Troop B, 4th U.S. Cavalry, Capt. James Parker
- 1895 Troop I, 4th U.S. Cavalry, Capt. James Lockett
- 1896 Troops C and I, 4th U.S. Cavalry, Capt. George H.G. Gale and Capt. James Lockett
- 1897 Troop C, 4th U.S. Cavalry, Capt. George H.G. Gale
- 1898 1st Utah Volunteer Cavalry, Capt. Joseph E. Caine
- 1899 (none listed)
- 1900 Troop G, 6th U.S. Cavalry, Capt. James A. Cole
- 1901 Troop I, 15th Cavalry, Capt. Lincoln Clarke Andrews
- 1902 Troop F, 3d U.S. Cavalry, Capt. Frank A. Barton
- 1903 (none listed)
- 1904 (none listed)
- 1905 (none listed)
- 1906 (none listed)
- 1907 Troop F, 14th Cavalry, Capt. Kirby Walker

2. Major Littebrant transferred from the Presidio of San Francisco to the Presidio of Monterey in December 1913. PSF, Post Returns, December 1913.

3. Capt. James Parker won the Medal of Honor for action on December 4, 1899, at Vigan, Luzon, Philippine Islands. His citation read, "While in command of a small garrison repulsed a savage night attack by overwhelming numbers of the enemy, fighting at close quarters in the dark for several hours."

1908 Troop G, 14th Cavalry, Capt. Cornelius C. Smith⁴
1909 Troop G, 14th Cavalry, Capt. Cornelius C. Smith
1910 Troop A, 1st Cavalry, Capt. Edmund S. Wright
1911 Troop A, 1st Cavalry, 1st Lt. David L. Roscoe
1912 Troop B, 1st Cavalry, Capt. Walter M. Whitman
1913 Troop C, 1st Cavalry, Capt. Douglas McCaskey

⁴ Capt. Cornelius C. Smith, when a sergeant in Troop K, 6th U.S. Cavalry, on January 1, 1891 (three days after the Battle of Wounded Knee) won the Medal of Honor for action at the Drexel Mission Fight near White River, South Dakota. The citation read, "With four men of his troop drove off a superior force of the enemy and held his position against their repeated efforts to recapture it, and subsequently pursued them a great distance."